

SHANNON REHLMAYER
ATHOME AMERICA
BRONZE STAR EXECUTIVE

June 13, 2006

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing this letter because I am concerned about the proposed Business Opportunity Rule R511993. I believe that in its present form, it could prevent me from continuing as an AtHome America HomeStyle Specialist. I understand that part of the FTC's responsibilities is to protect the public from "unfair and deceptive acts or practices," yet some of the sections in the proposed rule will make it very difficult, if not impossible, for me to sell AtHome America products.

I have been an AtHome America HomeStyle Specialist for more than three years. Originally, I joined AtHome America because the company I worked for had eliminated over 400 retail locations in a massive downsize. For the first time in over 20 years, I was looking for a job, and decided to explore alternatives in an industry with more flexibility and opportunity. I found AtHome America, and decided to join because I felt the products were exceptional, and I believe wholeheartedly in our company's mission statement, which puts faith and family first. I am extremely proud of my company, and am delighted to help others learn that direct selling is a legitimate, flexible, and rewarding way of doing business! The business model of direct selling is truly in the very best interest of families all across our nation, upholding "the American dream" by supporting and encouraging an entrepreneurial atmosphere. I am happy to help others find a wonderful job with AtHome America, like I have. My job, and the future of my family is dependent on the stability of the direct selling industry.

One of the most confusing and burdensome sections of the proposed rule is the seven-day waiting period to enroll new HomeStyle Specialists with AtHome America's sales kit only costs \$149.00, and can even be earned for free, a program which most Home Style Specialists take advantage of. People buy TVs, cars, and other items that cost much more and they do not have to wait seven days. This waiting period gives the impression that there might be something wrong with the company or the compensation plan. Under this waiting period requirement, I will need to keep very detailed records when I first speak to someone about AtHome America, and will then need to send in many reports to my company headquarters.

The proposed rule also calls for the release of **any** information regarding lawsuits involving misrepresentation, or unfair or deceptive practices. It does not matter if the company was found innocent. Today, anyone or any company can be sued for almost anything. It does not make sense to me that I would have to disclose these lawsuits unless my company is found guilty. Otherwise, AtHome America and I are put at an unfair advantage even though AtHome America strives to conduct business in the most ethical and compassionate manor.

Finally, the proposed rule requires the disclosure of a minimum of 10 prior purchasers nearest to the prospective purchaser. I am glad to provide references, but in this day of identity theft, I am very uncomfortable giving out the personal information of individuals (without their approval) to strangers. Also, giving away this information could damage the business relationship of the references who may be involved in other companies or businesses including those of competitors. In order to get the list of the 10 prior purchasers, I will need to send the address of the prospective purchaser to AtHome America headquarters and then wait for the list. I also think the following sentence required by the proposed rule will prevent many people from wanting to sign up as a salesperson - "If you buy a business opportunity from the seller, your contact information can be disclosed in the future to other buyers." People are very concerned about their privacy and identity theft. They will be reluctant to share their personal information with individuals they may have never met.

I appreciate the work that the FTC does to protect consumers, yet I believe this proposed new rule has many unintended consequences and there are less burdensome alternatives available to achieving your goals.

Thank you for your time in considering my comments.

Respectfully,

Shannon D. Rehlmeier